

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

List of Claims:

1-19 (canceled)

20. (currently amended) An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of movable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of articulating arms coupled together and movable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together, said the arms being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coupled configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

wherein the articulating arms are implantable in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coupled configuration;

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms and adapted to open and close the pair of articulating arms, wherein the arms can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter be opened to allow release of the leaflets;

a central member detachably coupled to a shaft, the shaft adapted for delivering the articulating arms into a heart, the central member being detachable from the shaft while the shaft is in the patient's body and adapted for delivering the articulating arms into a heart, the articulating arms being movably coupled to the central member and implantable in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coupled configuration after the shaft has been removed from the patient's body;

a pair of superior elements movably coupled to the central member, the superior elements being configured to engage the superior surfaces whereby the leaflets may be pinched between the articulating arms and the superior elements and wherein the superior elements are

resiliently biases into an extended configuration in which portions of the superior elements are spaced apart from the central member for engaging the superior surfaces of the leaflets.

21-66 (amended)

17. (currently amended) An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of movable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a flexible shaft having a proximal end and a distal end;

a pair of articulating arms coupled together near the distal end of the flexible shaft and being movable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together and to positions therebetween, the arms being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coupled configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms and adapted to open and close the pair of articulating arms; and

a pair of superior elements movably coupled, the superior elements configured to engage the superior surfaces whereby the leaflets may be engaged between the articulating arms and the superior elements.

wherein the articulating arms and superior elements are moved independently of one another and can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter be opened to allow release and recapture of the leaflets prior to implantation of the articulating arms in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coupled configuration after the flexible shaft has been removed.

21-71 (amended)

73. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 20, wherein the central member is configured to be positioned through the valve between the leaflets.

73. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 20, wherein the superior elements are coupled to a conduit slidably coupled to the central member.

74. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 20, wherein the articulating arms have engaging surfaces for engaging the surfaces of the leaflets.

75. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 74, wherein the engaging surfaces have a texture or teeth for enhancing friction.

76. (currently amended) An apparatus as in claim 20, wherein the shaft is flexible and configured for positioning through a blood vessel into the heart.

77. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 76, wherein the shaft, articulating arms and central member are slidably positionable through an endovascular sheath.

78. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the articulating arms have engaging surfaces for engaging the surfaces of the leaflets.

79. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 78, wherein the articulating arms engage the surfaces of the leaflets without penetration thereof.

80. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 78, wherein the engaging surfaces have a texture or teeth for enhancing friction.

81. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the articulating arms and superior elements are slidably positionable through an endovascular sheath.

82. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the articulating arms and superior elements are slidably positionable through a blood vessel into a heart.

83. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the control mechanism is adapted to open and close each articulating arm independently.

84. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the control mechanism is adapted to open and close the articulating arms in tandem.

85. (previously presented) An apparatus as in claim 67, wherein the superior elements are resiliently biased.